

STATUS OF CLAIMS

Claims 8 – 14, 16, 17, 19, 25 and 27 – 40 were pending.

Claims 16, 17, 19, 25, 27, 28 and 30 – 34 stand allowed.

Claims 8 – 10, 35-38 and 40 stand rejected.

Claims 13 and 39 stand is objected to.

Claims 11, 12, 14, and 29 stand withdrawn from consideration.

Claims 11, 12, 13, 14, 29, and 35-40 are cancelled herein, without prejudice.

REMARKS

Allowance of Claims

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the allowance of Claims 16, 17, 19, 25, 27, 28 and 30 – 34. Applicants further acknowledge that dependent Claim 13 (depending directly from independent Claim 8) stands objected to by the Examiner but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. In response, Claim 13 has been canceled, the subject matter thereof being incorporated into independent Claim 8. Accordingly, amended Claim 8 is deemed allowable.

35 U.S.C. 102 Rejections and Objections

Claims 8 – 10, 35 – 38, and 40 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b), as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,576,487 to Conover, Jr. et al. Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's rejection, however, in order to expedite allowance of the present application, Claims 35-38 and 40 have been cancelled herein and without prejudice, and independent Claim 8 has been amended to include allowable subject matter of now cancelled Claim 13. For completeness, Applicant notes that previously withdrawn Claims 11, 12, 14 and 19 have also been cancelled herein without prejudice. Previously objected to Claim 39 has also been cancelled herein. In view of these amendments, all present rejections

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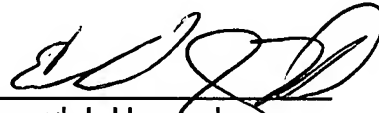
and objections to the application are deemed overcome and the present case is in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

Having addressed all outstanding grounds raised by the Examiner, Applicants respectfully submit the present case is in condition for allowance, early notification of which is earnestly solicited.

Should there be any questions or outstanding matters, the Examiner is cordially invited and requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at his number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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